

LP

F

5012

1853

H



3 9004 01379369 7

**Queen's University
Library**

KINGSTON, ONTARIO

AN APOLOGY
FOR
BRITISH AND COLONIAL
MEDICAL DEGREES,
OR
STRICTURES

ON THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY ON THE LAWS RELATIVE TO THE PRACTICE OF
PHYSIC, SURGERY AND MIDWIFERY IN LOWER CANADA.

BY

A. HALL, M. D., EDIN.,

Lecturer on Materia Medica and Pharmacy, University of McGill College.

MONTREAL:

H. RAMSAY;

QUEBEC, P. SINCLAIR; BYTOWN, A. BRYSON; KINGSTON, A. DUFF;
TORONTO, A. H. ARMOUR AND CO.; LONDON, C. W., J. M. GRAHAM;
EDINBURGH, MACLACHLAN AND STEWART; LONDON, J. CHURCHILL.

JOHN LOVELL, PRINTER, ST. NICHOLAS STREET.

1853.

F5012

1853 H

The following three letters appeared originally in the columns of the Quebec *Morning Chronicle*. They are now submitted with emendations, and a few trifling additions, to the favourable consideration of the members of the Legislative Council, and Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled, prior to the anticipated debate upon the subject to which they refer.

REPORT.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

25th October 1852.

(*Translation.*)

The Special Committee to whom was referred the Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the laws relative to the practice of Physic, Surgery and Midwifery in Lower Canada," have the honor to report as follows :

Your Committee having submitted the accompanying questions to different members of the Medical Profession, both in Upper and Lower Canada, and having duly considered the answers to the said questions, which they lay before Your Honorable House, are of opinion that the Act passed in the 10th and 11th years of Her Majesty's Reign, intituled, "An Act to incorporate the Members of the Medical Profession in Lower Canada, and to regulate the study and practice of Physic and Surgery therein," which entitles to a License to practise Physic, by a certificate of the Medical Board, and exempts from examination before that Board, all persons who are holders of Medical Degrees or Diplomas in any University or College in Her Majesty's dominions, is not sufficiently calculated to prevent the abuses and detect the impositions which may possibly occur.

That this law, in granting such a privilege, tolerates these abuses and impositions which are most prejudicial to the interests and advantage of the public in general.

That with a view to prevent the abuses and impositions which, under the operation of that Act, may possibly occur, it should be amended as proposed by Dr. LaTerrière's Bill, referred to this Committee, and by striking out the proviso contained in the ninth section thereof.

That in order to meet the wishes and views of the great majority of the Physicians who have been consulted on this subject, and whose opinions are given in the annexed letters, your Committee have deemed it necessary to recommend the three following amendments to the Bill referred to them, namely: after the word "therein" in the seventh line of the first section, add the following words: "and the proviso contained in the ninth section of the same Act;" after the word "and" in the same line of the same

section, strike out the word "is" and insert the word "are" in lieu thereof; and after the word "cited" in the tenth line of the second section, strike out the words, "Provided also, That any person who shall have served in Her Majesty's Army or Navy, being on half-pay, and producing his Diploma or Commission in the Service as such, to the Provincial Medical Board, may obtain a License to practise Physic and Surgery without being bound to undergo an examination."

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
COMMITTEE ROOM, No. 4,
QUEBEC, 20th September, 1852.

Questions submitted to different Members of the Medical Profession by the Special Committee appointed to take into consideration the Bill annexed to the said Questions, "to amend the law relative to the practice of Physic, Surgery and Midwifery in Lower Canada :"

1. Will you please to suggest to the Committee the most effective means of ascertaining the qualifications of those who present themselves before the Medical Board of this Province to be licensed to practise Physic, Surgery and Midwifery in this Province?

2. From your experience as a Member of this Board or of the College of Physicians in this Province, are you of opinion that the law which entitles to a license from the Medical Board to practise Physic, and which exempts from examination all those who hold certificates, degrees or diplomas, obtained from any University or College in Her Majesty's dominions, is a sufficient security against abuses, and an efficient check on the impositions which the law may occasion by such a dispensation? and what means do you consider that the Board might adopt to put an end to such abuses and impositions?

3. Is it a fact within your knowledge, that a number of candidates have obtained certificates in order to being licensed as Medical practitioners in this Province, on presenting credentials, without possessing the necessary qualifications to practise the Art? and state what you know on the subject?

4. How many Colleges and Incorporated Schools do you number in this Province, in which the various branches of the Medical Art are taught with success?

5. Should you think fit to confer on the Professors of these different Medical Schools the privilege of granting credentials to their pupils, the effect of which would be an exemption from examination before the Provincial Board?

6. Speaking of reciprocity in Physic ; do you believe that an M. D. of McGill College, or a licentiate of any Medical School in Canada, going to England, would be entitled to practise his profession there without previously undergoing an examination, and giving proof of his qualifications ?

7. Do you consider that the Bill hereunto annexed, brought in by Dr. LaTerrière, would be a sufficient remedy against the abuses and impositions in question ? and if not, what would you suggest as a means of rendering this Bill more efficacious, and what effect would you expect therefrom ?

8. Do you consider that a law placing the Medical Profession on an equal footing in Upper and Lower Canada, would meet with the approbation of Practitioners in general, and obviate the difficulties arising from a law affecting only one part of the Province ?

SIR,

You are requested to answer the above questions at your earliest leisure, as the Committee are desirous to report without delay.

By order,

J. P. LEPROHON,
Clerk of Committee.

BILL.

An Act to amend the Law relative to the practice of Physic, Surgery and Midwifery in Lower Canada.

WHEREAS it is inexpedient that any person should obtain a license to practise Physic, Surgery or Midwifery in Lower Canada, without undergoing an examination before the Provincial Medical Board : Be it therefore enacted, &c.,

That the seventh section of the Act passed in the Session held in the tenth and eleventh years of Her Majesty's Reign, and intituled, "*An Act to incorporate the Members of the Medical Profession in Lower Canada, and to regulate the study and practice of Physic and Surgery therein,*" shall be, and is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, That for and notwithstanding any thing in the said Act, or in the Act amending the same, passed in the twelfth year of Her Majesty's Reign, and intituled, "*An Act to amend the Act to incorporate the Medical Profession in Lower Canada, and to regulate the study and practice of Physic and Surgery therein,*" no person shall, after the passing of this Act,

receive a license from the Provincial Medical Board to practise Physic, Surgery or Midwifery in Lower Canada, unless he shall have undergone an examination before the said Board, and obtained a certificate of qualification from the said Board ; Provided always, that nothing in this Act shall apply to females practising Midwifery in Lower Canada under the provisions of the Act first above cited ; Provided also, that any person who shall have served in Her Majesty's Army or Navy, being on half-pay, and producing his Diploma or Commission in the Service as such, to the Provincial Medical Board, may obtain a License to practise Physic and Surgery without being bound to undergo an examination.

Report of the Special Committee on the Laws relative to the Practice of Physic, Surgery, and Midwifery in Lower Canada.

The foregoing is the title of a pamphlet which has been but recently received, and that through the kindness of one of the members of the House, and I propose in as little space as possible to analyse its contents, and to sift the arguments, whereon it is proposed by Dr. Laterrière to found the remodelling of the law, now regulating the medical profession of this Province.

Scarcely six years have elapsed since that law was enacted, and during that period of time, strange as it may seem, every session of the Legislature has witnessed attempts similar to the present. The grand object, now as then, is the levelling of the Universities; and although the attacks were hitherto more honestly and openly made, and the design more manifest, yet there is no difficulty in unmasking the present scheme, and while exposing and denouncing it, to exhibit the futility of the reasoning upon which the pretensions are founded.

It is a singular fact, that in a province like our own, in which Institutions for the higher walks of learning are not over-abundant, and in which honors in the different *faculties* may be secured, as the reward of superior industry and acquirement, such Institutions are not only not more cherished than they are, but that there are to be found parties ready and willing to embark in every crusade against them, scrupling not to avail themselves of even the brief authority with which they may be invested, to encompass their object. It is deplorable to think that such things are so. It behoves us not to inquire into the motives, how patent soever the design may be. I prefer taking the matters as I find them. The attempt to degrade the Universities is made by attacking their honours vitally. It remains to be seen whether a majority in the Legislature can be found to approve such a scheme.

Dr. Laterrière and his committee having previously prepared a Bill of amendments, submitted it with a series of eight questions

to various members of the profession, whose opinions thereon were seriously invited. Based, as it was professed to be, on the existence of "certain abuses and impositions," and ignorant of any such or their nature, I preferred to the committee a request for information on that point (page 61,) to which I have received no answer, and the only acknowledgment that I have, that my note ever reached the committee room, is its appearance in the "report." Possibly prudence dictated the silence of the committee on this point. How far it was dignified is another question, which it is a matter of no consequence to discuss at present. Answers having been received from about seventy licensed practitioners, of whom seven reside in Canada West, while a large proportion of the remainder figure illegitimately with the much despised M. D., to their names, the special committee report that the "Act &c., which exempts from examination before that Board all persons who are holders of Medical degrees or diplomas in any University or College in her Majesty's dominions, is not sufficiently calculated to prevent the abuses and detect the impositions which may possibly occur."

"That this law, in granting such a privilege, tolerates these abuses and impositions, which are most prejudicial to the interests and advantage of the public in general.

"That with a view to prevent the abuses and impositions which under the operation of that Act, may possibly occur, it should be amended as proposed by Dr. Laterrière's Bill, referred to this committee, and by striking out the proviso contained in the ninth section thereof."

Now what are these abuses and impositions, to get rid of which so much anxiety is displayed by Dr. Laterrière and his coadjutors.

Dr. Painchaud replies: "candidates bearing Diplomas without possessing the necessary qualifications have presented themselves before the Board (what Board?) to be licensed to practise—one, the bearer of a McGill College Diploma had studied medicine eighteen months." To this assertion, as having been a member of

* To 3rd Question.—To my knowledge, as a member of the Medical Board, candidates bearing diplomas, *without* possessing the necessary qualifications, have presented themselves before the Board to be licensed to practise. One, the bearer of a McGill diploma, had studied medicine but

the McGill College for the last fifteen years, I have merely to state that it is a most malicious calumny. No one ever yet received that Diploma after the period of study alleged—such is Dr. P's first case. Of Dr. Painchaud's second case, that of the Irishman, I know nothing. But permitting to that gentleman the same full sway of imaginative power that he has displayed in his first case, I have no doubt it could be as easily explained away.

Dr. McKelcan, of Hamilton, replies that he has known "that young men of very superficial attainments, both general and professional, and who were afraid to present themselves before the Toronto Medical Board, have gone to McGill College, in Montreal, and obtained certificates, and returned to practise as M. D.'s in Upper Canada, to the detriment of the public, and the injury of the character of the Medical profession." It is as well that Dr. McK. has dealt in generalities. Those who have received the degree of the University have been found well qualified to practise, and of this I feel convinced, that no graduate of that University could diagnose *a fracture of the sacrum which never existed, and not detect a fracture of the neck of the femur which did exist*. People who live in glass houses should be careful how they throw stones; and it is doubtful, whether the positive "detriment of *the* licensed practitioner is more to be deplored, than the hypothetically supposed damage likely to accrue from persons whose ignorance "general and professional" was recognised only by *one* "surgical star" months before they were permitted to practise.

Dr. Beaubien, in his reply, alludes to the case of Dr. Logie, who graduated at McGill College in 1833. This gentleman obtained his license from the Board after an order of the Court, to which the case was referred. He obtained his degree after every compliance with the law, and was sustained by the law in his de-

eighteen months. I asked that he should be made to swear that he had studied during the period required by law; the McGill gentlemen, forming a majority, opposed my demand, and the candidate obtained his license. An Irishman, the bearer of a Surgical diploma, presented himself to be licensed; his diploma exempted him from examination on that branch (Surgery); doubts arose as to his right to the diploma. Had he not bought it, or borrowed it? The question was solved by the oath required by law. Subjected to an examination on medicine, he gave proof of the grossest ignorance. Six months after, he went up to Montreal, and obtained his license!—(*Dr. Painchaud's Reply, Page 5*).

mand for his license, which the Board refused except after an examination to which he declined to submit, on the ground of its being an illegal and arbitrary exaction. There was neither "imposition nor abuse" in this case on the part of Dr. Logie. These resided altogether on the other side, as the event proved: and the citation of the occurrence now is another evidence of the same fact, and demonstrates that with the adducer at least, his hostility to the University which granted the degree has not ceased, but has, on the contrary, become considerably warmed by some twenty years nursing.

With the exception of two cases specified by Dr. Marsden, (Page 6) against which, I believe, that no objections can be urged, these are the only instances given in the whole report, and to what extent they are entitled to credit I have just exhibited; but an analysis of the report will give any reader the following curious statistics, as the basis on which Dr. Laterrière has grounded his recommendation for an alteration of the existing law.

Of those who state that they are cognizant of the fact that licenses have been obtained upon the presentation of false testimonials there are.....	17
Of those who deny all knowledge of any such fact, and whose capabilities of knowing are equal to the last	27
Of those who state that they have "heard" that such transactions have taken place there are.....	9
And of those who allege that they know nothing positive in regard to the subject there are.....	14
Or in fewer words, as a summary; for the existence of "impositions and abuses" there are.....	17
Against,.....	50

These unquestionably are queer statistics, militating as they do with all the force of figures against Dr. Laterrière's position. And after all, to what does the whole amount—that during the currency of some twenty years, some two or three individuals obtained a license to practise in this colony upon presentation of false credentials—to which fact some seventeen members of the profession attest, and among whom I have no objection to have my own name

enrolled. But I have to remark that *no such instance has occurred since the enactment of the present law*, and that an alteration of it on such grounds becomes therefore a mere pretence. The object is to assail the British Universities by undervaluing their degrees, and to catch one rogue Dr. Laterrière proposes to humiliate the mass of British graduates and surgeons. As a maxim of criminal jurisprudence, an individual is always presumed innocent, until proved to be guilty. Dr. Laterrière and his coadjutors reverse the sage maxim, and desire to esteem every British graduate an impostor until he proves himself otherwise. Let him twist it and turn it, and disguise it as he may, but to that “complexion will it come at last”; and to Dr. Laterrière belongs all the honour.

I will refer to other questions in my next.

Montreal, Feby. 25th, 1853.

No. 2.

Having shewn in my first communication, that real cases of “abuse and imposition” were remarkably rare, perhaps not exceeding three or four during a period of twenty years, and that none have occurred during the last six, and having exposed the morality of the proposed alteration of the Law, now existing, the arguments against Dr. Laterrière’s scheme are by no means exhausted. There are always two circumstances in favour of the British Graduate, and Surgeon, which as relating to the presentation of his testimonials before the Medical Board, ought not to be lost sight of:—1st. The presumption in his favour that he is the rightful possessor of the documents: and 2nd, That to obtain them he must have undergone a severe ordeal.

With regard to the 1st circumstance, the rule is as stated; and falsification is the exception. To guard against the latter, the Law as it at present stands, empowers the chairman of the Board to administer an oath to the candidate, which, if violated, subjects him to all the penalties for perjury. *Quoad* British graduates and Surgeons, the portals of admission to practise in this province are there foresufficiently guarded. But 2ndly, to obtain British Degrees or Diplomas, the bearers of them have had to submit to a severe ordeal; and by reference to any British Medical periodical, in which these examinations are usually periodically inserted,

their character and quality may be seen. To submit such men to a second examination, before a Board, a large proportion of the members of which could not themselves pass through the examination, which the holders of these degrees have previously successfully undergone, for the mere purpose of proving their competence, is to say the least an insult ; and if for the purpose of proving that they were the *bona fide* holders of the Degrees or Diplomas, it becomes an absurdity. I desire to say but little of the character of the examinations at the Medical Board. That they are of an inferior stamp is a fact which is generally conceded ; nor is the reason one of difficult solution. The large majority of the examiners are persons engaged, it may have been for years, in practice, who during the turmoils of an active professional life have forgotten the minutæ, on which the superstructure of their own local distinction has been founded. While such men may be competent to test *practically* the acquirements of a candidate, they prove generally but sorry enquirers into his rudimentary knowledge, which is the point mainly to be determined. Hence it is, that in the Universities, a knowledge of both principles and practice is demanded, and the candidate undergoes a most scrutinizing examination on both subjects, by those most competent to determine his proficiency, viz : his teachers ; while at the Medical Board for the reason cited, he is examined usually in the latter only, and therefore the inferiority of the latter examination : and the difference of the relative standards is in nothing more clearly demonstrated than in the fact, that numerous cases have occurred, in which rejected candidates from McGill College have passed the Medical Board, while *licensed* candidates have failed to obtain their degree. British degrees should therefore be accepted, because they are a guarantee that the sworn holder has passed through every necessary test of proficiency ; and they are a proof, and the best proof, of his competence to practise.

Such then, are the remarks naturally called forth on analysing the answers to questions 1 2 and 3, and I think that the design in their proposal has been sufficiently disclosed.

The sixth question is a gem in its way, and deserves a much wider circulation than it is likely to receive in the pages of the report. Here it is :

“ 6. Speaking of Reciprocity in Physic : do you believe that

an M. D. of McGill College or a licentiate of any medical school in Canada going to England, would be entitled to practise his profession there without previously undergoing an examination and giving proof of his qualifications."

Reciprocity in Physic! What superlative nonsense! Well might a large number of the most intelligent of those who have replied to the questions declare their inability to comprehend its meaning; and were it not, that some glimmering of the intention of our Solons in using the expression escapes in the concluding portion of the sentence, we might "die in aromatic pain" in attempting to unriddle it. The nearest approach to an appreciation of the originality and elegance of the observation that I can discover, is to be met with in the story of a certain golden pill, which, in days of yore, when charms and amulets were in common use, performed wonders in its transit through the bowels of successive numbers of her Majesty's lieges in London, securing for its fortunate proprietor an ample fortune. That was reciprocity in physic of the strictest character and with a vengeance.

Equally unfortunate in the use of words is the committee in employing the terms "Licentiate of any medical school in Canada." The Committee ought to have known that no medical school in Canada has the power of licensing, consequently there can be no licentiates of them.

The question, however, which is submitted in the query is really one of importance, and while there exists little difficulty in replying to it satisfactorily, I must confess to some degree of surprise at the general ignorance on the subject which prevails, and the attempts at mystification of it on the part of others, which the report exhibits. It may be perfectly true that in accordance with existing rules, the degree of M. D. of McGill College may not qualify the holder for an office in a metropolitan or provincial hospital in the mother country, and that he "would not be admitted into the medical department" of the Army or Navy--(Dr. MacDonnell's reply, page 10.) The regulations of these Institutions, it must be remembered, vary from time to time; and while it may prove sufficiently timely to admit it to be fact, when a Colonial graduate applies for such offices, and has been, because he is such, refused, yet I am at a loss to perceive any necessary connection between a specified require-

ment for a particular office, and the question submitted viz : that of legal practice upon the degree in England. Dr. McDonnell's statement that a graduate of McGill College would not be recognized in England," is at utter variance with the positive testimony of an opposite character of Dr. Badgley, Dr. Wright, Dr. Holmes, and Dr. Campbell, to which I have to add my own testimony, that the degree *would be recognised and has been recognised* in more instances than one. Dr. Gibb's testimony is at more singular variance with the tenor of the question submitted. His degree went for nothing when he was seeking the diplomata of Irish Institutions ; and so precisely would it be with McGill College in regard to other Institutions. This mystification of the subject is to be regretted, as tending to embarrass it in the minds of those members who will be called upon to decide upon the matter by their votes. The question is simply, can the holder of a McGill College M. D. practise in England, and to this simple question facts declare that he can, with the exception of London and a circuit of ten miles around it, from which the charter of the Royal College of Physicians debars him ; and in this respect he stands precisely on the same ground as the graduate of any other British, or even foreign University. He can practise as a physician, and as a physician only. His degree gives him no other privilege, and to no other is he entitled. But to that privilege he is fully and legally entitled, and in his pretension he would be sustained, as has been abundantly proved in the instances of graduates from the Scottish Universities. The question of the committee, then, is thus plainly and succinctly answered, and Dr. Laterrière is thus shorn of another argument, on which, I have no doubt, he fondly based his hostility against British graduates.

I will conclude these strictures on the report of the Special Committee in my next.

Montreal, March 3rd, 1853.

No. 3.

Question 7.—“ Do you consider that the Bill hereunto annexed brought in by Dr. Laterrière, would be a sufficient remedy against the abuses and impositions in question ? And if not, what would

you suggest as a means of rendering this Bill more efficacious, and what effect would you expect therefrom?"

Before proceeding to consider the answers to this question, as they stand recorded in the pages of the Report, it may be as well to notice, to what advantages the degree of M. D. of McGill College actually entitles the holder in Great Britain. I have already noticed the fact, that the possessor of it may practise as a physician in any part of England, beyond ten miles of London, enjoying in this respect the same privileges as any other British graduate. But, besides this, the presentation of the document secures for him an immediate examination for the diploma of the Colleges of Surgeons of London and Edinburgh, should he desire it, with exemption from attendance on additional lectures. I could adduce a number of instances of this fact, these Colleges of Surgeons placing our graduates in the same rank with those of the Home Universities, thus honoring the University in the persons of the holders of its degrees. The College of Surgeons of Ireland appears to have acted otherwise in the case of Dr. Gibb (page 52.) The practice of this College is the opposite of that of its sister Colleges—why, I know not. I might suggest a reason, but decline to do so.

"The Committee having duly considered the answers to the above questions, are of opinion that to prevent the abuses and impositions, which under the operation of that act, may possibly occur, it should be amended as proposed by Dr. Laterrière's Bill," &c. After this distinct avowal of due consideration of the answers, we have every reason to conclude, that a majority of those consulted were in favour of a change of the existing law, and of the amendments as proposed by Dr. Laterrière's Bill, and that the committee was justified in recommending to the House the adoption of the measure. But the facts all tend the opposite way, and show conclusively that in this matter as well as in many others, "the wish was father to the thought." An object was to be attained, a bill of amendments was prepared and proposed, the farce of an appeal to the profession was gone through, due consideration was announced, and the said bill was solemnly recommended. But the facts of the appeal prove the reverse—they demonstrate, trumpet-tongued, the opposite of what Dr. Laterrière and his coadjutors so warmly desired, and a very simple

examination of the replies, which doubtless the committee thought would never be undertaken by any one, at least by any member of the Assembly, clearly exhibits the expression of an opinion the very reverse of that which these gentlemen so ardently desired.

For Dr. Laterrière's Bill of amendments.....	32
Against.....	43
<hr/>	
Majority against the bill.....	11

Now, it is far from my desire to employ language towards the committee in the slightest degree disrespectful, but most assuredly I have demonstrated a case in which the severest denunciation could be easily justified, and would not be deemed undeserved. And what is the crime for which the British graduates are thus to be humiliated? Is it that their professional education is of an inferior quality to that of the Incorporated Medical Schools of this Province? No man in his senses will pretend to this, and yet the committee would insinuate something of the kind. Is it that the examination which they have undergone is an inadequate one? Facts prove the reverse, yet the committee would subject them to one of an inferior degree; and for what purpose—"to prevent and detect imposition!" Better far would it have been for Dr. Laterrière and his committee, as it would have been more creditable, to have directed their attention to such amendments of the existing law as would restrain ignorant females from practising midwifery in the country districts, the evils of which have been so strongly pointed out by Dr. Dechesne (page 63) and others. This would have been an object worthy of their serious attention, and one from which they would certainly have derived a more enduring honor, than from their present crusade against the British Universities and their graduates, which can secure for them nothing but their lasting scorn and contempt.

But what are the faults committed by the McGill College University, that it should be the object of such relentless persecution, such untiring hate, the subject of such numerous open and covert attacks? Is it alleged that the duties of its Lecturers are carelessly and indifferently performed? A testimony the reverse of this is afforded in the Report. It is admitted on all hands to be

“ a successful medical school,” nay its matriculations prove it to be “ the most successful medical school of the Province.” Is it maintained that its honors have been wantonly scattered around, or that incompetent persons have acquired them ? It is indeed true that one individual in Quebec and another in Hamilton, neither of them an authority on such a question, have indulged in assertions equivalent to the above ; but I have already in my first communication sufficiently met their unwarranted statements. An assertion, be it observed, is by no means an argument, while it is still further disproved by the general favour awarded to the holders of McGill College degrees throughout both sections of the Province.—No : the real secret is the possession of its Royal Charter, which secures to it immunities and privileges which are not enjoyed by the incorporated Medical Schools of the Province. Foiled in every effort to obtain for the latter the power of granting independent Diplomas, a measure ruinous to the best interests of the Profession, and which has been most wisely rejected by the Legislature, their grand object now is to pull down the University to their own level, and, like the dog in the manger, which, unable himself to eat the hay, snarled, growled, and attempted to prevent his superior from enjoying his repast, to deprive others of those privileges which they themselves cannot obtain. I feel grieved to place this observation upon record, but it is the only conclusion to which a reflecting person can arrive who has watched these proceedings in the Assembly during the last six years. The pretense in the present case is far too shallow to conceal the design. It is sad to think that such schemes can be entertained, but sadder still to find persons willingly abetting their accomplishment, and in the most unwarrantable manner drawing conclusions from the evidence which they themselves have sought, the reverse of that which it really affords.

But in all these proceedings, if there is one thing, which more than another exhibits the crudity of Dr. Laterrière’s opinions, it is to be found in his willingness to admit Army and Navy surgeons, and ignorant midwives to those privileges, which he would deny to all others. We question much whether these gentlemen will thank him for his concession when offered in a manner so little complimentary, and especially when he places them in such ambiguous company. Verily “ ignorance is bliss” in Dr. Laterrière’s

opinion, when that blissful state is amply sufficient to secure an exemption from an examination with its concomitant grim array of imaginary horrors. In the report however, Dr. Laterrière abandons his concession in regard to the Army and Navy Surgeons, but retains it in reference to the midwives. How anomalous is the position in which Dr. Laterrière and his coadjutors place themselves. In few words, it resolves itself into a scheme, in which the door of practice is to be closed against the most educated, except upon the most humiliating conditions, but opened freely to the most ignorant, whose operations throughout the country districts generally are so notorious, that they should call forth measures of the most stringent, instead of those of a patronizing, character. Surely this simple statement is itself sufficient to condemn the proposed Bill of Amendments.

Lastly, with regard to the eighth question ; of the propriety of a Law for Upper Canada, similar to that of Lower Canada, there cannot exist two opinions. It is much to be desired that the professional chaos which reigns there should be reduced to some kind of order and precision. Admitting the Englishman's privilege and inherent right, to die in any manner, and by whatever means he pleases, there exist contingencies, independent of this consideration, which should not be lost sight of by a legislature, operating for the greatest good of the greatest number, and among these is the legitimate practice of the healing art, after a scientific and prescribed course of instruction. Adopting the weakest argument which could be urged in favour of the measure, and even admitting that no others could be adduced, it becomes the duty of the Government and the Legislature to protect the medical man in the legitimate exercise of his profession, when it is spending large sums of money annually in enabling him to receive that instruction which is necessary to qualify him for his duties. To act otherwise bespeaks inconsistency. It is preaching to the ear but mocking to the sense ; and while the Legislature will reject Dr. Laterrière's Bill, I hope to see it extending the provisions of our own act of Incorporation to the profession of the sister Province, modified however according to its wishes.

A. HALL, M. D., E.

Montreal 8th, March, 1853.



